



Introduction — After the Disaster

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the concerns immediately following a disaster. For those living within the area struck by a disaster, the first concern is to locate family members and pets. Then people begin to assess the damage to their homes and property and begin to take the steps toward recovery.

The information in this chapter is intended to assist people living in a disaster zone in the immediate period of time after a disaster. Remember that the advice and recommendations of local emergency management officials always take precedence over information in this handbook.

Immediate concerns after a disaster are safe drinking water, food supplies, power shortages and sanitation. It is important for sanitary conditions to be maintained as much as possible to prevent the spread of disease. This chapter discusses conducting rescue operations, emotional recovery, meal preparation, disinfecting wells and dealing with problem insects and wildlife.

Insurance and financial concerns are on the minds of many people after a disaster. Advice in this chapter can help people deal with a money crunch and recover from their property losses. A variety of government assistance programs are explained in this chapter, including grants, loans and the National Flood Insurance Program. Helpful tips for local government officials can help communities get back on track with economic redevelopment and rebuilding.

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